

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed on December 19, 2003. A Petition for One-Month Extension of Time, to and including April 19, 2003 and a check for the requisite fee are submitted herewith. In the event any additional fees are necessary in connection with the present Amendment, kindly charge the cost thereof to our Deposit Account No. 13-2855.

35 U.S.C. § 102 REJECTIONS

Claims 1, 7, and 9-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by German reference 9004019.8. Claim 1 has now been amended to incorporate language of claim 2, now canceled, reciting the --inlet is positioned above the outlet,-- and language from claim 3, now canceled, reciting --the outlet is positioned towards a bottom of the vessel.-- Inasmuch as claims 2 and 3 were indicated in the Office Action to be allowable claims, it is therefore respectfully submitted that claim 1, as amended, and all claims depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance. Claim 1 was also amended by deleting "including" in line 3, and substituting -- comprising --.

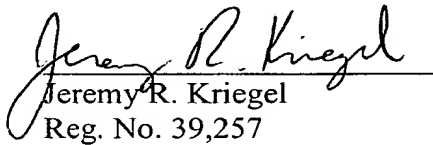
Claim 12 was also rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by German reference 9004019.8. Claim 12 has now been amended to recite -- the inlet is positioned above the outlet --. Inasmuch as this amendment is similar to the amendment to claim 1 to incorporate the language of allowable claim 2, it is respectfully submitted that claim 12, as amended, and all claims depending therefrom, are also in condition for allowance.

All claims of the application have also been amended by deleting the language "characterised in that" and substituting -- wherein --, to better conform to U.S. patent claim practice.

Allowable Claims

The Applicants note, with appreciation, the indication in the Office Action that claims 2-6, 8, and 13-15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In view of the amendments described above, it is respectfully submitted that all claims still pending in the application, as amended, are now in condition for allowance. The Examiner's reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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